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An Open Letter to Crawford County Kansas Attorney Reina Probert: Request for Support and Investigation into Meta Platforms Inc. (Facebook) and its Actions against a Resident of Crawford County

Douglas C. Youvan
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September 18, 2023

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Reina Probert
Crawford County Attorney
11th Judicial District of Kansas
1st Floor Courthouse, Suite A
Girard, Kansas 66763

Re: Request for Support and Investigation into Meta Platforms Inc. (Facebook) and its Actions against a Resident of Crawford County

Dear Reina Probert,

I reach out to you as a dedicated resident of Crawford County, deeply concerned about recent actions taken against me by Meta Platforms Inc., specifically Facebook, which I believe strike at the very heart of the fundamental rights we, as Kansans, hold dear. My background, both as a former professor at MIT and a CEO in Silicon Valley, has instilled in me a profound respect for the free exchange of ideas and the crucial role of platforms in enabling this exchange.

Central to my concerns is Section 11 of our Kansas Constitution's Bill of Rights, which declares: "The liberty of the press shall be inviolate; and all persons may freely speak, write or publish their sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of such rights." This foundational principle is, I fear, being threatened by the very platforms that should uphold it.

Recently, leveraging the platform of ResearchGate—a scholarly repository where I have contributed over 450 publications and earned a notable H-index—I documented concerns about a dire situation in Ukraine,

specifically the heart-wrenching fatalities of children due to the ongoing war and the allegations of organ harvesting. Recognizing the broader audience reach of Facebook, I sought to share this information, titled "Meta Facebook in Violation of Federal Injunction Brought By Attorneys General of Louisiana and Missouri", on their platform as well. To my dismay, rather than facilitating this dialogue, Facebook not only removed my content but also restricted my ability to communicate on their platform.

While Facebook operates as a private entity, its unparalleled role in contemporary communication bestows upon it a responsibility akin to a public commons. Its actions against my account and the removal of content feel deeply incongruous with the protections enshrined in our state's constitution.

In light of the above, I earnestly request:

1. **Investigation**: An in-depth probe into Meta Platforms' content moderation decisions, particularly concerning residents of Crawford County, assessing potential violations of our state's constitutional rights.
2. **Advocacy**: Should findings suggest any misalignment with our state's cherished principles, I hope the Crawford County Attorney's office will champion the rights of its residents, ensuring we aren't imperiously silenced by influential tech platforms.
3. **Guidance**: Your insights on potential legal recourse available to address this perceived infringement on my constitutional rights, which I fear might extend to other Kansans as well.

Democracy thrives in the marketplace of ideas, where every voice—whether in agreement or dissent—has its rightful place. I place my trust in the Crawford County Attorney's office, confident in its unwavering commitment to uphold our state's values and protect our rights. I eagerly await your guidance on this matter and remain available for further discussions or clarifications.

With utmost respect,

Douglas C. Youvan
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